

COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN FOR BRISTOL BAY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Assessment of the Bristol Bay watershed confirms mega mine could threaten Bristol Bay; fishermen call for protection of jobs and the world's most valuable salmon run

Anchorage – Responding to the Environmental Protection Agency's release of a scientific assessment of Alaska's Bristol Bay watershed, commercial fishermen in Alaska and across the country are urging the EPA to uphold standards under the Clean Water Act and take action to protect the fishery from any adverse impacts associated with large-scale mine development. The report confirms that large-scale hard rock mining threatens America's largest salmon run and the thousands of salmon jobs and industry that depend upon it.

"The EPA's scientific report makes it clear Pebble Mine's plan to dig a hole displacing 10 billion tons of waste material is bad for Bristol Bay's fish and salmon habitat," said Lindsey Bloom, a leader of Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay, a national coalition of 95 American commercial fishing organizations and industry-related businesses. "The EPA should take the next logical step and prohibit or restrict toxic mine waste in the Bristol Bay watershed."

The assessment finds that Bristol Bay's annual runs of 40 million sockeye salmon on average make it the largest and most valuable single salmon run in the United States.

"Too many American fisheries have been wrecked by habitat damage and chemical pollution," said Robin Samuelsen of Dillingham. "This may be our country's last chance to get it right the first time. Bristol Bay is the largest and most valuable salmon fishery on the planet, and this is where the American people are drawing the line."

The EPA has now opened a 60-day public comment period on its scientific assessment and invites the public to read the report and submit comments. Comments can be [submitted online at this link](#) or via e-mail at ORD.Docket@epa.gov

"It's important for people to comment on this assessment and let the EPA know that our nation's largest renewable salmon resource should not be traded for corporate profit," said Katherine Carscallen, a third-generation Bristol Bay fisherman and CFBB spokesperson. "We need the entire nation to help protect Bristol Bay, not only for our jobs but for the renewable salmon runs which make up nearly half the sockeye salmon supply on earth."

The EPA's 339-page report is the product of more than a year of data review, scientific analysis and hearings in the region. It is also being reviewed by a panel of peer experts.

"Bristol Bay's sockeye salmon are too important to risk with the nation's largest open-pit mine. We have concerns about damaging the value of the seafood industry in Alaska and beyond," said Bill Adler of the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association. "We encourage EPA to consider careful restrictions that protect Bristol Bay and our nation's fisheries."

For more information, visit: www.fishermenforbristolbay.org

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